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ABSTRACT

Employer involvement is a crucial element in the success of school-to-work initiatives. To reach out to employers, states can do the following: target key employers and industries; foster employer ownership; give employers opportunities to recruit their peers; create or collaborate with intermediary organizations; establish partnerships with labor organizations; publicize the school-to-work concept; and provide "how-to" information to employers. Despite employer interest in participating in school-to-work programs, some barriers may impede their involvement: the costs of participation, challenges in developing working relationships with schools, child labor restrictions, liability concerns, and workers' compensation requirements. By working with employers to address these barriers, states can demonstrate their commitment to making the school-to-work system responsive to employer concerns. Governors can take the following actions: target key industries likely to employ tomorrow's work force and suggest school-to-work transition as a strategy; set school-to-work initiatives as a high priority for the state's economic development system and education systems; encourage statewide business groups to play a role; publicize school-to-work efforts of leading employers; and initiate a review of state laws, regulations, and practices that pose barriers to employer participation. (Contains 45 references.) (YLB)

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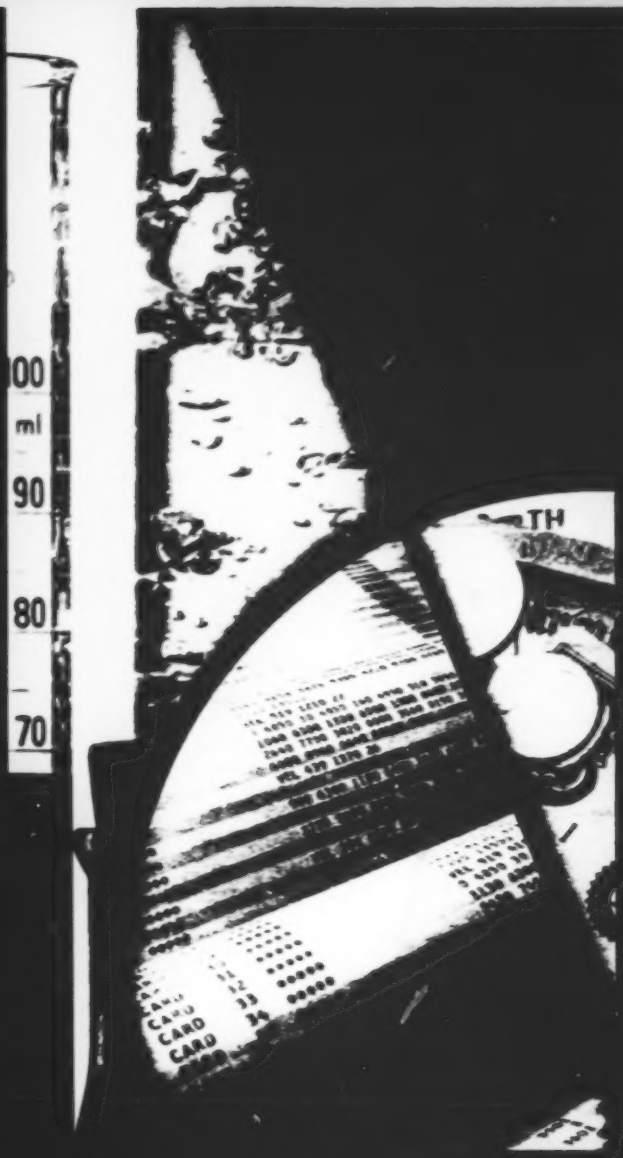

The Employer Connection:

State Strategies for Building School-to-Work Partnerships

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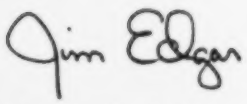
FOREWORD

Working together, Governors and business leaders can enhance economic development to keep pace with a rapidly changing economy and can make a difference in the education of America's young people. One of the major economic challenges we face is improving the skills of our people so that they can compete successfully in a global economy. This means that we must foster lifelong learning by strengthening the connection between education and work, as our youth prepare to enter the workforce, and as our adults continue to upgrade their skills to keep pace with changing demands in the workplace.

School-to-work initiatives are vehicles for making this connection between education and work. They require the formation of collaborative partnerships among employers, educators, students, parents, and community leaders. The active involvement of employers is especially important because these initiatives must incorporate the teaching of knowledge and skills that are demanded by employers and that prepare students to be successful.

For all students to have the opportunity to experience work-based learning, employer participation must be expanded beyond its current level. Toward this end, the National Governors' Association convened a School-to-Work Roundtable to bring together Governors and business leaders. Over the last two years, members of the roundtable have promoted public private collaboration in efforts to prepare the workforce for future challenges. The roundtable's work concludes with the publication of *The Employer Connection: State Strategies for Building School-to-Work Partnerships.*

This publication describes examples of strategies that Governors and other policymakers are using to promote employer involvement in school-to-work partnerships. We hope that these strategies will lay the groundwork for developing even greater public private collaboration to help young Americans find career success and to help U.S. companies achieve prosperity.



Governor Jim Edgar
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ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

The Employer Connection: State Strategies for Building School-to-Work Partnerships is a product of a two-year effort initiated by the National Governors' Association School-to-Work Roundtable. The roundtable is composed of Governors and business leaders and is dedicated to expanding public private collaboration through school-to-work initiatives. The roundtable's activities are supported by The Pew Charitable Trusts, the Ewing Marion Kauffman Foundation, the Joyce Foundation, and the American Express Foundation.

The National Governors' Association gratefully acknowledges these individuals who reviewed drafts of the publication: Robert Glover of the University of Texas at Austin, Richard Kazis of Jobs for the Future, Peter Joyce of the National Alliance of Business, and Robert Soltys of the National Employer Leadership Council. Special thanks are also extended to Governors' office representatives and state officials from Illinois, North Carolina, and Wisconsin.

The preparation of this publication was a collaborative effort of the Education Policy Studies Division and the Employment and Social Services Policy Studies Division. Evelyn Ganzglass and Mark Rigdon directed the development of the publication. Jill Hyland was the primary author. David Brown and Patricia Brown made contributions to its writing. Within the Office of Public Affairs, Alicia Aebersold managed the publication process and Karen Glass edited the report. Karen Krause and Debbie Woods of the Employment and Social Services Policy Studies Division provided production assistance.

Executive Summary

Employers, educators, and workforce planners must collaborate to an unprecedented degree if schools are to prepare students for the workforce. This partnership is important because students need to acquire the skills that are demanded by employers and that are truly relevant to their future employment. Moreover, enhancing the skills of America's youth provides a basis for enhancing economic growth. This connection between student success and economic growth can be maintained only if employers are full partners in school-to-work initiatives.

School-to-work initiatives link classroom learning to experiences in the workplace. Failure to integrate employers fully into school-to-work systems will leave these initiatives with little connection to work and limit their success. Yet, to date, the emerging school-to-work systems lack the degree of employer involvement needed to make them truly market-driven.

To encourage the public/private partnership that is needed to ensure the success of school-to-work initiatives, the National Governors' Association (NGA) convened a School-to-Work Roundtable in 1994 to bring together Governors and chief executive officers from leading businesses. Developed at the request of the roundtable, this publication provides examples of the strategies states are using to encourage more employer participation in emerging school-to-work systems. These strategies include reaching out to employers and removing barriers to their participation.

State Strategies to Reach Out to Employers

To reach out to employers, states can do the following.

- **Target key employers and industries.** Targeting key employers and industries can help states link school-to-work programs with economic development priorities and other workforce development efforts. Specifically, states can target industries that are expected to grow in the future, that are currently experiencing labor shortages, that will prepare students for high-wage jobs, that are related to current economic development efforts, and that are most likely to participate in school-to-work efforts.

- **Foster employer ownership.** Making employers full partners in the development and implementation of school-to-work systems will make these systems better reflect employers' workforce needs. Strategies for encouraging employer ownership include identifying employer interests, incorporating employers' interests into the system's design, and ensuring that employers serve on advisory and governance bodies.

- **Give employers opportunities to recruit their peers.** States can encourage participating employers to persuade other employers to join these school-to-work programs. Employers who are

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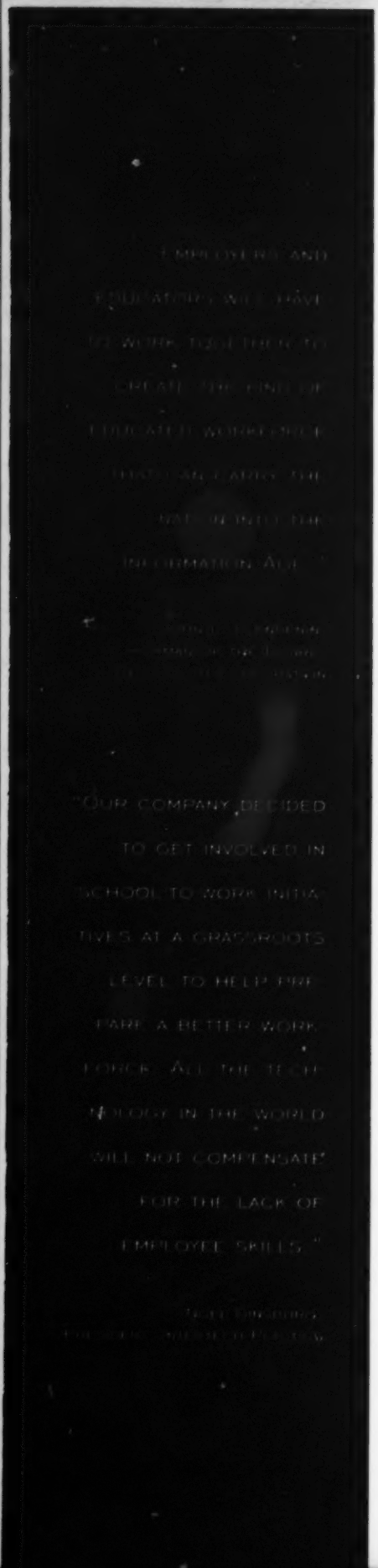

NOT YET PARTICIPANTS MAY BE MORE LIKELY TO RESPOND TO THEIR PEERS THAN TO OUTSIDERS BECAUSE THEIR PEERS SHARE THE SAME NEEDS AND THEY CAN DEMONSTRATE HOW THE PROGRAMS WORK. IN ADDITION, NONPARTICIPATING EMPLOYERS MAY RECOGNIZE THAT THEIR INVOLVEMENT IN SUCH PROGRAMS WILL GIVE THEM OPPORTUNITIES TO NETWORK WITH OTHER BUSINESS LEADERS.

- **CREATE OR COLLABORATE WITH INTERMEDIARY ORGANIZATIONS.** INTERMEDIARY ORGANIZATIONS, SUCH AS LOCAL CHAMBERS OF COMMERCE, PROFESSIONAL AND TRADE ASSOCIATIONS, AND OTHER NONPROFIT ORGANIZATIONS, CAN BE KEY PARTNERS IN ENCOURAGING EMPLOYER PARTICIPATION. THEIR ROLES CAN INCLUDE ORGANIZING NETWORKS OF EMPLOYERS, FACILITATING COMMUNICATION BETWEEN EMPLOYERS AND EDUCATORS, COORDINATING FINANCIAL RESOURCES, AND REDUCING THE ADMINISTRATIVE BURDEN ON INDIVIDUAL EMPLOYERS.

- **ESTABLISH PARTNERSHIPS WITH LABOR ORGANIZATIONS.** GETTING THE SUPPORT OF LABOR UNION MEMBERS CAN PROVIDE A UNIQUE ENTREE TO RECRUITING EMPLOYERS; IN ADDITION, IT CAN BENEFIT THE PROGRAM BY INVOLVING INCUMBENT WORKERS IN DESIGNING WORK-BASED LEARNING PROGRAMS, TRAINING STUDENT SUPERVISORS, AND WORKING DIRECTLY WITH STUDENTS.

- **PUBLICIZE THE SCHOOL-TO-WORK CONCEPT.** PUBLICITY OF SCHOOL-TO-WORK PRINCIPLES CAN MAKE A COMPELLING CASE FOR WHY EMPLOYERS ARE NEEDED AND SUGGEST HOW PARTICIPATION CAN HELP MEET BUSINESS NEEDS. STATES CAN CONVENE CONFERENCES DESIGNED TO INFORM EMPLOYERS ABOUT SCHOOL-TO-WORK CONCEPTS, GENERATE THEIR INTEREST, AND HEAR THEIR CONCERNS.

- **PROVIDE "HOW-TO" INFORMATION TO EMPLOYERS.** TO MAKE IT EASIER FOR EMPLOYERS TO PARTICIPATE, STATES CAN DEVELOP "HOW-TO" INFORMATION TO GUIDE EMPLOYERS IN CREATING SCHOOL-TO-WORK ACTIVITIES, ESPECIALLY IN DESIGNING WORKPLACE EXPERIENCES FOR STUDENTS. STATES ALSO CAN PROVIDE TRAINING FOR WORKPLACE SUPERVISORS AND CLEAR INFORMATION ON CHILD LABOR LAWS AND WORKPLACE SAFETY REQUIREMENTS.

State Strategies to Reduce Barriers to Employer Participation

Despite employer interest in participating in school-to-work programs, some barriers may impede their involvement. These barriers include the costs of participation, challenges in developing working relationships with schools, child labor restrictions, liability concerns, and workers' compensation requirements. By working with employers to address these barriers, states can demonstrate their commitment to making the school-to-work system responsive to employer concerns.

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What Governors Can Do

Gubernatorial leadership is critical in articulating a strong, positive vision of the pathway to future economic viability, including the preparation of the future workforce. Governors can use their influence to bring public and private sector groups together as well as to foster the collaboration among state agencies needed to make the system responsive to employer needs.

Governors can do the following.

- Stress the importance of the linkages among education, students' future career successes, firms' competitiveness, and the state's economic strength.
- Target key industries that are likely to employ tomorrow's workforce and suggest school-to-work transition as a strategy.
- Set school-to-work initiatives as a high priority for the state's economic development system and elementary, secondary, and postsecondary education systems.
- Meet with and recruit the state's top business leaders.
- Speak to members of statewide business groups and encourage them to play a role.
- Appoint influential business leaders as key school-to-work spokespeople.
- Publicize the school-to-work efforts of leading employers and recognize and thank them for their participation.
- Initiate a review of state laws, regulations, and practices that pose barriers to employer participation.

Governors are in a unique position to convince the public, employers, and a range of education stakeholders that school-to-work efforts create opportunities for students, hold benefits for employers, and pave the way for addressing future economic challenges.

I. Employers and School-to-Work Transition

School-to-work programs strive to increase the relevance of education and expose students to a range of career possibilities by tying classroom lessons to workplace applications. In doing so, these programs provide students, incumbent workers, and business leaders with the opportunity to meet the challenges of a rapidly changing economy.

Across the nation, model programs demonstrate how employers can direct resources to school-to-work efforts to make them beneficial to both employers and students.

- General Motors (GM) anticipates an increased demand for qualified automotive service technicians in the next several years to keep up with the large number of repairs needed in auto dealerships. Because of the changing technology in auto repair, entry-level technicians need to be much more computer literate. After observing programs in GM's European division, the company initiated plans for a technician apprenticeship program combining on-site learning experiences for eleventh and twelfth graders followed by enrollment in community colleges.

- After a survey by a graphic arts trade magazine revealed that high school students ranked their interest in printing industry careers relatively low, a major printing company, Banta Corporation, initiated school-to-work activities designed to ensure that a new generation of skilled printing professionals would be available to take the place of an aging skilled workforce. It developed career awareness workshops and invited both students and teachers to the workplace so that they could learn about career opportunities and see how the printing industry has modernized technologically.

- To counter the shortage of qualified health technicians, Massachusetts General Hospital, along with other Boston-area hospitals, initiated Project ProTech to help increase the pool of qualified entry-level health care technicians. The program combines customized classroom instruction with student internships at local hospitals. Not only does the program help provide skilled workers, but it helps Boston high school students explore opportunities for careers in health care that can be continued through postsecondary education.

The involvement of these and other employers is a crucial element in the success of school-to-work initiatives. Yet, to date, the emerging school-to-work systems lack the degree of employer involvement needed to make them truly market-driven. Many school-to-work efforts are still driven largely by educators and workforce development officials and, therefore, risk overlooking the workforce needs of employers.

Fostering more employer participation in school-to-work initiatives is challenging. The vision for an effective school-

"Our company believes that bringing students into the workplace for extended periods proves to young students and their teachers that what is learned at school is of lasting importance."

—Carl Weigell, Chairman, Motor Castings Company

to-work system calls for fundamental and unprecedented changes in the way schools and employers interact. For employers, participation often requires making changes in the workplace and up-front investments of time and money.

Yet it is important to make these changes. Failure to integrate employers fully into the school-to-work system will leave these programs with little connection to work and limit their success. Consequently, school-to-work planners must ensure that the emerging systems are market-driven and responsive to employer needs.

Governors and business leaders can play a critical role in encouraging businesses to become part of school-to-work initiatives. With gubernatorial and business leadership, states can use a variety of strategies to encourage employer participation in the design of the state system and to encourage local communities to develop their own forms of collaboration.

Why Would Employers Want to Participate?

Employers currently involved in school-to-work programs are motivated to participate by two factors: the desire to perform a community service and the desire to address unmet workforce needs. Employers who are active in school-to-work programs view both of these motivations as important.[1]

School-to-work programs can help employers do the following.

- **Upgrade the skills of entry-level workers to meet the demands of new technology, changing workplaces, and international competition.** New entrants to the workforce must be equipped with more enhanced skills than were required in the past, and school-to-work programs can help provide the skills needed to meet these new challenges.
- **Prepare entry-level workers to replace aging workers.** In some industries, employers are unable to find new workers with the industry-specific skills that their older workers possess. School-to-work programs can provide a larger pool of young workers to replace older workers as they retire.
- **Recruit employees.** School-to-work programs give employers the opportunity to develop student interest in their firms. The programs also help employers screen student applicants who may work for them after completing school.
- **Reduce turnover.** By investing in student training, employers can encourage entry-level workers to stay with them longer, thus reducing turnover costs.
- **Develop a supply of part-time employees.** Many employers need to hire part-time or seasonal employees. They use students in this capacity because student schedules are suited to part-time work and students usually seek this type of employment while in school.
- **Reduce workers' compensation costs.** By providing training in workplace safety to future entry-level employees, accidents during the first several months of employment can be reduced, thus lowering workers' compensation costs.

- **Improve the local education system.** In helping to design school-to-work programs, employers can improve the quality and relevance of local education systems and therefore improve students' preparation for the entry-level workforce. For example, modifying school curricula to incorporate more real-world applications may enhance students' motivation for learning.

- **Assist in public relations.** Companies can publicize their school-to-work efforts to promote goodwill in the community. Similarly, many chambers of commerce or industry associations sponsor programs to promote their geographic region or industry.

- **Engage in community service.** Some managers and top-level executives actively seek ways to become involved with local schools and other community activities to develop their roles as good "corporate citizens." Employers report that these community activities also increase employee morale.

How Can Employers Get Involved?

Employers are needed to participate in school-to-work programs in a variety of ways at both the state and local levels. Some kinds of participation involve designing programs and setting policy, while others involve working directly with students. Employers can do the following.

- **Provide opportunities for students to learn at work sites.** Whether of short or long duration, work-based learning is the most important component of a school-to-work program. Examples range from short visits to the workplace to long-term apprenticeships. Providing work-based learning experiences requires that employers plan for student work, provide supervision, and offer feedback.

- **Provide input to educators in the development of school curricula.** Employers can assist school officials in modifying the curriculum to make it more relevant to the workplace. They can suggest ways to enhance academic instruction using subject matter and examples from occupational fields.

- **Mentor students.** Employers can meet and talk with students so that they can explore various career options, learn the pathways to those careers, and identify the skills certain occupations demand. Adult practitioners can also provide students with encouragement and lessons in self-awareness.

- **Provide workplace learning opportunities for school administrators, counselors, and teachers.** Employers can provide opportunities for teachers and other school personnel to spend time at work sites during school vacation periods to learn about new technologies or new skills so that they can better prepare their students for employment.

- **Speak or teach in the classroom.** Employers and practitioners can make classroom presentations to inform students about the importance of good work habits and about career opportunities. They also can demonstrate to students how their classroom

Employers Most Likely to Participate

According to Jobs for the Future, a leading school-to-work research group, firms that are most likely to participate in school-to-work programs have these characteristics:

- prior involvement in school-business partnerships;
- a tradition of leadership in community affairs;
- a commitment to being a "learning organization";
- hiring practices that include hiring high school graduates;
- cooperative labor-management relations;
- competition with other firms in the same industry; and
- a familiarity with U.S. and European work-based learning models.

These findings suggest that employers who participate in school-to-work efforts often have a broad perspective on the development of human resources.

Source: Susan Goldberger, Richard Kazis, and Mary Kathleen O'Flanagan, *Learning Through Work: Designing and Implementing Quality Worksite Learning for High School Students* (New York: Manpower Demonstration Research Corporation, 1994).

The National Employer Leadership Council

The Washington, D.C.-based National Employer Leadership Council (NELC) is a coalition of employers dedicated to improving America's workforce through work-based learning. Its members are chief executive officers who are committed to developing school-to-work programs that are employer-driven. NELC's mission is to "make investments to develop and implement exemplary school-to-work learning opportunities; recruit other employers in a region or industry to make similar commitments; provide an employer perspective to all audiences on school-to-work participation; identify and champion the best school-to-work practices; and measure progress in establishing school-to-work activities and in involving member companies." This national model has inspired the development of similar employer coalitions at the state level.

Source: National Employer Leadership Council, "NELC: Helping Create Tomorrow's Workforce," draft brochure, National Employer Leadership Council, Washington, D.C., 1995.

studies help prepare them for employment in the real world.

- **Develop and recognize skill standards.** Employers can work with educators to develop the skill requirements and standards that students should meet to receive certification in various occupational fields.
- **Serve on planning and governance bodies.** Employers can serve on advisory or planning boards that design, develop, and implement local school-to-work programs. They also can serve on governance boards at the regional or state level.
- **Recruit other employers.** Employers, either individually or through network organizations, can encourage the participation of their peers.

Employers do not have to engage in all of these activities to become involved in school-to-work programs. They can choose the activities that best meet their needs and available resources. For example, if employers want to increase student interest in their industry, they might design career exploration activities for students. If employers want to upgrade the skills of the entry-level workforce, they might develop a long-term apprenticeship program.

Although businesses have engaged in some of these activities for years, building a school-to-work system requires that their involvement with students increase and intensify. Specifically, employers are needed to offer work-based learning that brings students into the workplace to engage in hands-on learning experiences.

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II. State Strategies To Reach Out To Employers

School-to-work programs are rarely initiated by employers. In most cases, these initiatives are developed by educators, workforce development officials, and other program planners who then convince business leaders to participate. It is important that employers be equal partners in the development and implementation of school-to-work efforts.

To reach out to employers, states can:

- target key employers and industries;
- foster employer ownership;
- give employers opportunities to recruit their peers;
- create or collaborate with intermediary organizations;
- establish partnerships with labor organizations;
- publicize the school-to-work concept; and
- provide "how-to" information to employers.

Through each of these strategies, states can encourage employers to participate in developing the state school-to-work system and to become key partners in local programs. States can use each of these strategies at the state level and also use them as a foundation for building local partnerships.

Target Key Employers and Industries

The benefit of targeting key employers and industries is that school-to-work programs can be linked to economic development activities, educational priorities, and other workforce development efforts. In addition, recruitment resources will not be spent haphazardly but will be focused on recruiting employers who are committed to worker training and who are most likely to participate.

States can target industries that:

- are expected to grow in the future;
- are currently experiencing labor shortages;
- will prepare students for high-wage jobs;
- are related to current economic development efforts; and
- that are made up of firms that are most likely to participate.

Many states are using this targeting strategy. For example, for one of its apprenticeship programs, New Jersey is targeting industries that will pay high wages to students upon completion of training; the target wage is set at 80 percent or more of the state's average wage. Colorado is targeting the state's key industries, including telecommunications, health services, biotechnology and biomedical technology, business and related services, agriculture, manufacturing, and public service. Several other states, including Maryland, Massachusetts, and Pennsylvania, are coordinating their emerging school-to-work systems with economic development and workforce development efforts.

Different types of employer involvement can be tailored to meet the needs of particular industries. For example, in industries where firms have trouble recruiting entry-level employees because of a lack of interest in the occupational field, school-to-work programs may focus on work-site visits, job shadowing,

"School-business partnerships must address the mainstream business needs of companies if we are to get the kind of involvement we need."

–Governor Jim Edgar, Illinois

"First and foremost, we must answer how we will keep and increase employer involvement in business-education partnerships. This means identifying solid strategies for increasing the involvement of employers, both public and private. Employers are a critical piece of the partnerships we are trying to build; in fact this type of education reform will fail without more active involvement from the business community."

–Governor Roy Romer, Colorado

Creative Outreach Strategies

States have developed their own strategies for communicating with employers about school-to-work programs.

- The Delaware Economic Development Department provided local schools with maps identifying businesses in their region so that school officials could recruit these employers.
- New Jersey mailed a request for proposals to 200 employers to encourage the development of consortia of employers, schools, and community organizations for grant applications.
- North Carolina will be designating one staff member in each high school as a "job broker" who will work with employers.
- Wyoming placed ads in newspapers encouraging employers to apply for "venture capital" funds from the state to start their own school-to-work programs.

and other types of career exploration activities. Industries that are unable to find entry-level employees with the requisite industry-specific skills may benefit from implementing more intensive work-based training activities as part of youth apprenticeship programs. Special targeting strategies can be developed to encourage the participation of different types of employers, such as public sector employers, small businesses, and employers in rural areas. Designing school-to-work programs to meet the needs of the targeted industries is an important part of employer outreach.

Public Sector Employers. Working with public sector employers is a strategy that Governors are in a unique position to implement. For example, they can encourage state agencies to participate by developing internship programs.

Small Businesses. Many proponents of school-to-work programs believe that gaining the participation of small businesses is one of the system's most formidable challenges. Although these businesses often express interest in working with students, the costs can be particularly burdensome. Several programs have addressed this problem by developing industry-based consortia so that businesses can hire students for a short period before the students rotate to another business. Small businesses can also be encouraged to participate in ways other than providing work experience. For example, New Jersey is working with industry associations of small businesses such as the Electrical Contractors' Association to develop curriculum and skill standards.

Employers in Rural Areas. Because few employers may be located in rural areas and transporting students to distant work sites may be difficult, states may need to develop special targeting strategies for these areas. Such strategies might include the following.

- Work with public sector employers. Students can be introduced to a wide range of career fields in federal, state, or local government; public utilities; and schools, which often are the primary employers in rural areas.
- Develop school-based enterprises. Employers can provide equipment and expertise to help build simulated work sites within schools.
- Bring students to employers. Students can take group field trips during the summer or travel for short-term internships to regions of the state where more employers are located.
- Use technology. Students can be linked to employers through teleconferences and other forms of electronic communication.
- Create service learning activities. Many job-related competencies can be developed through volunteer activities that are coordinated through community organizations.

Foster Employer Ownership

Another strategy for encouraging employer involvement is to ensure that employers are full partners from the beginning stages of system development. If employers are involved in the initial design of school-to-work efforts, then the programs are more likely to reflect their needs. Two strategies for fostering employer engagement and ownership are to identify employer needs and incorporate them into the program design and to make employers part of advisory and governance bodies.

IDENTIFYING AND INCORPORATING EMPLOYER NEEDS. Several states have developed surveys and used focus groups to assess employer interest in school-to-work programs, identify the relative importance of certain barriers to employer participation, and determine the best methods of approaching employers. The information gained through these surveys and focus groups can be used to develop school-to-work programs that respond to employer needs and to establish themes for a marketing strategy.

To learn more about recruiting small businesses, program planners in Maine held focus groups composed of small business owners. In North Carolina, the Governor's Commission on Workforce Preparedness worked with the labor market information division of the employment security commission to design a questionnaire for employers that asks them about the relative importance of barriers to school-to-work participation.

Oregon contracted with a private marketing company to conduct a survey and focus groups with employers addressing a number of workforce and management issues, including school-to-work participation. The results of the survey will be used not only to develop a marketing strategy, but to help state officials tailor the state system to address the needs of employers. For example, the results indicate that employers are interested in helping develop programs to improve teachers' knowledge of the workplace. Planners now know that employers want teacher education to be part of the program.

INVOLVING EMPLOYERS IN GOVERNANCE AND ADVISORY ENTITIES. Another strategy for fostering employer involvement and ownership is to include business representatives on governance and advisory entities at the state and local levels. To help ensure that school-to-work programs reflect the employer perspective and are market-driven, several states are issuing guidelines or requirements for employer representation on these boards and councils.

- IOWA REQUIRES BUSINESS INVOLVEMENT IN REGIONAL AND LOCAL SCHOOL-TO-WORK PARTNERSHIPS. THE STATE SCHOOL-TO-WORK COUNCIL WILL BE CHAIRED BY A PRIVATE SECTOR MEMBER.
- KENTUCKY REQUIRES THAT 51 PERCENT OF THE MEMBERS OF LOCAL PARTNERSHIP COUNCILS BE EMPLOYERS.
- MICHIGAN REQUIRES THAT 51 PERCENT OF THE MEMBERS OF THE GOVERNING BOARDS OF ALL LOCAL PARTNERSHIPS BE PRIVATE FOR-PROFIT EMPLOYERS.
- NORTH CAROLINA HAS COMMITTED TO HAVING 51 PERCENT OF THE MEMBERS OF ITS STATEWIDE JOBREADY PARTNERSHIP COUNCIL BE EMPLOYERS.

Moreover, some states have created special councils composed exclusively of employers. For example, Michigan Governor John Engler appointed a Governor's Council of Employers for School-to-Work composed of leaders of major corporations to provide advice on program development, coordinate the establishment of skills standards, and monitor the programs' progress.

Another way to encourage employer ownership of the school-to-work system is to engage employers in program activities such as the development of curriculum and the establishment of skill standards. Usually, these types of activities involve mid-level managers and technicians. Although these efforts can be time-consuming, they enable employers to influence their future employees' education and skill development. For decades, employers have developed curriculum and standards through vocational education advisory committees for both the secondary and postsecondary education systems. In recent years, these efforts have been expanded to further integrate the lessons of the classroom and the experiences of the workplace.

WHAT EMPLOYERS IN OREGON WANT

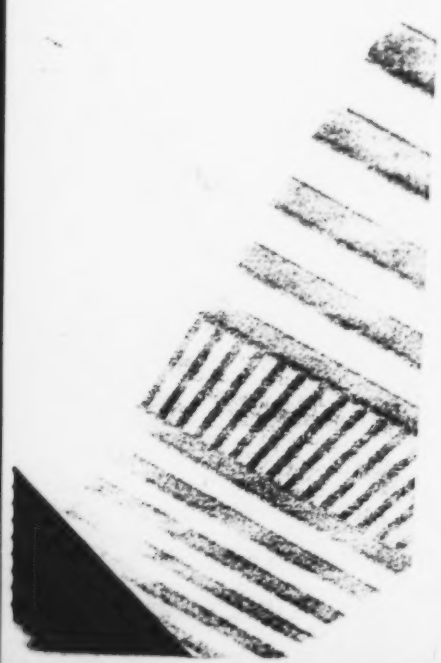
Through surveys and focus groups, employers in Oregon were asked what program planners could do to make participation in school-to-work programs more appealing. The employers proposed that the planners:

- STREAMLINE THE PROCESS OF INVOLVEMENT;
- IMPROVE STUDENTS' READINESS TO WORK;
- ENHANCE TEACHERS' KNOWLEDGE OF THE WORKPLACE;
- RESPOND TO EMPLOYERS' NEEDS;
- TARGET AND SEGMENT THE EMPLOYER "MARKET";
- ENHANCE NON-WORKSITE OPPORTUNITIES, SUCH AS SCHOOL-BASED ENTERPRISES; AND
- PUBLICIZE SUCCESSES.

Source: The Reed Company, "Oregon Works II: 1994 Survey of Oregon Employers" (Lake Oswego, Ore: The Reed Company, 1995).

Local Partnerships and Economic Development in Massachusetts

Through its system of regional employment boards (REBs), Massachusetts will award school-to-work funding on a competitive basis and make economic development a key consideration in grant awards. On a regional basis, REBs are required to coordinate their school-to-work activities with the established regional economic development blueprints and demonstrate how the industry clusters chosen for school-to-work activities are connected to the economic viability of the region. They also have to explain how the region's industries fit into the state framework. The approach in Massachusetts illustrates how defining the role of local partnerships can help coordinate employer involvement in economic development efforts.



For example, the Indiana Workforce Proficiency Panel was established through state legislation and appointed by Governor Evan Bayh. The nine-member panel includes four representatives from the business community, three from labor organizations, and two from education agencies. It is responsible for defining the technical skills that are needed in the workplace and in occupational groupings. In Illinois a new law created a Standards and Credentialing Council composed of representatives of business, industry, and labor to make recommendations on the development of skill standards to the state board of education.

Give Employers Opportunities to Recruit Their Peers

Many states are using employers to promote school-to-work participation by other employers. The rationale is that employers are more likely to respond to their peers because they share the same needs and they can demonstrate how the programs work; in addition, new recruits may see their involvement as an opportunity to network with other business leaders.

This type of recruitment often takes place through forums or conferences, where participating employers explain their roles and their reasons for participating in school-to-work activities. In North Carolina, Governor James B. Hunt Jr. appointed a Employer Leadership Council primarily to recruit other employers. The council's members serve as "champions" who speak directly to their peers.

In Colorado, through the Business Executive-On-Loan initiative, several executives already active in school-to-work initiatives donate time to visit and recruit other employers. The state has contracted with a public relations firm to work closely with this group in developing recruitment strategies and materials. It also has developed a CEO Think Tank, composed of business leaders from top companies, who speak to other employers and develop relationships with intermediary organizations.

Create or Collaborate with Intermediary Organizations

Although some employers are now extensively involved in school-to-work efforts, this level of commitment is rare. Individual employers often lack the time or expertise to work with students. To expand employer participation, the development of new infrastructures to support employer efforts must be explored.[4]

Intermediary organizations, such as local chambers of commerce, professional associations, and other nonprofit organizations, can be key partners in implementing school-to-work programs. They can use their existing networks to bring together educators, community leaders, and employers to focus on school-to-work transition. However, some of these organizations may not be prepared to fulfill this role.[5] Their staff members may specialize in advocacy or promotion, but they may not have the interest or expertise to administer school-to-work programs. They may need to be persuaded of the benefits of participation and may also need help in developing the capacity to carry out their new functions. Building capacity may include training and developing networks of employers and educators.

Nevertheless, working with intermediary groups is a popular method of employer recruitment for states. Intermediaries can provide many advantages.

- Intermediaries can facilitate recruitment through their networks of employers.
- Employers often view intermediaries as credible and therefore are willing to lend them their support.

- Employers and schools can pool resources through intermediaries.
- Intermediaries can help reduce the administrative burden on employers of school-to-work involvement.
- Intermediaries can facilitate communication.
- Intermediaries can reduce the probability that a local program will be too dependent on one employer.

Intermediary organizations exist at both the state and local levels. They are based around regional groupings, such as local chambers of commerce, industries, or professions.

Many states are working with local and statewide business organizations.

- The Iowa Association of Business and Industry is assisting the state in establishing career pathways and identifying necessary skills for the workplace.
- Maryland plans to work with employer organizations as a central part of its employer involvement strategy at both the state system-building level and the local program level. At the state level, Maryland will dedicate a portion of its federal school-to-work funds to an incentive pool for use by trade associations, employer consortia, and labor organizations. These organizations can use the funds to develop skill standards, work-based learning activities, and supervisor training programs. Similarly, the state will require that local partnerships dedicate 25 percent of their school-to-work grant funds for similar use by employer organizations at the local level.
- New York circulated a request for proposals to its chambers of commerce and other intermediaries to develop employer recruitment programs. The state selected several local chambers of commerce to establish model programs that promote these organizations as brokers between employers and educators.
- In North Carolina, NC Partners was formed as an umbrella organization for all those groups, organizations, and businesses involved in fostering partnerships for better North Carolina schools. NC Partners is the primary link to the employer community and is strategically positioned to encourage the involvement of employers across the state.
- Oklahoma has identified the Oklahoma City Human Resource Society as an important "consumer" of future labor because it represents personnel specialists. The society is developing an assessment tool to identify needed workplace skills that will be considered by the executive school-to-work council.
- To develop skill standards, West Virginia is working with the West Virginia Education Fund, an employer organization dedicated to education reform and business-education partnerships.
- The Association of Manufacturers and Commerce in Wisconsin developed a statewide compact under which it committed to major employer recruitment efforts, including encouraging businesses to offer work-based learning opportunities.

Industry Groups and Work-Based Learning in Maryland

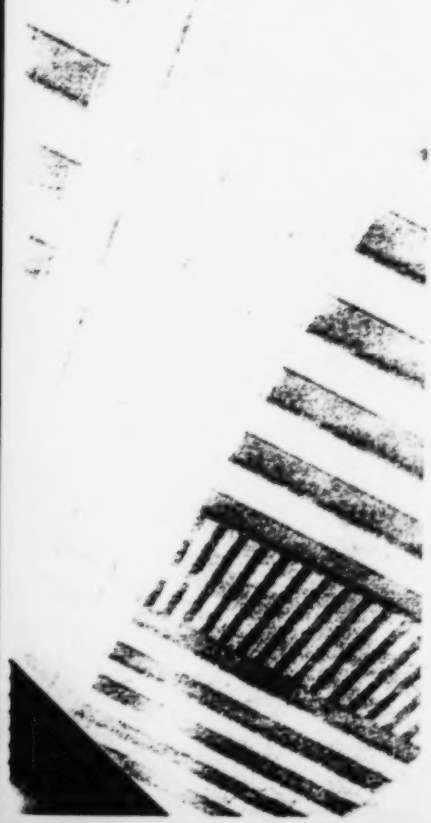
Maryland plans to tie its school-to-work efforts to its economic development strategies to make the school-to-work system market-driven. Industries with high wages and skilled workers will be the target industries. As part of its employer involvement strategy, the state is establishing an employer incentive fund targeting industry-based consortia interested in developing work-based learning models. As part of the criteria for awards, industry groups are required to provide matching funds. They also must demonstrate that their industry is likely to grow and that the industry will likely have employment opportunities. Statewide curriculum development will focus on nine career clusters related to industries the state has identified as important to the Maryland economy:

- consumer service, hospitality, and tourism;
- business management and finance;
- human resource services;
- manufacturing, engineering, and technology;
- construction and development;
- health and biosciences;
- arts, media, and communication;
- environmental and natural resources systems; and
- transportation technologies.

Coordinating these academic career clusters with the state's important industries will help make the school-to-work system reflect the needs of employers.

School to Work and Customized Job Training in Pennsylvania

Pennsylvania's strategy for building school-to-work initiatives uses its statewide economic development infrastructure. The Pennsylvania Department of Commerce's eight industrial resource centers (IRCs) help small and medium-sized manufacturers become competitive by providing them with customized job training services. A staff member in each IRC coordinates school-to-work efforts with the firms receiving training. These firms, as well as others that receive state economic development assistance, are encouraged to incorporate a school-to-work focus in their human resource development plans.



These peer-to-peer recruitment methods are being used to give added credibility to school-to-work initiatives. By reaching out to these intermediary organizations, rather than relying on individual employers, school-to-work planners hope to engage a larger number of employers.

Establish Partnerships with Labor Organizations

Another way to secure employer involvement is to develop partnerships with members of employers' existing workforces. Organizations representing labor can play a unique role in establishing school-to-work initiatives and in developing student and teacher skills. Not only can labor organizations be involved in an advisory and planning capacity, but they can design work-based learning programs, train workplace mentors, and work directly with students. Getting the support of labor union members can provide a unique entree to recruiting employers and involve incumbent workers in teaching students about important workplace issues such as safety. Their support can also be important in establishing linkages with registered apprenticeship programs. Partnerships with labor organizations help secure the commitment of those largely responsible for its success—those who work directly with students.

For example, Washington is developing its school-to-work initiative based on the same sense of partnership that underlies its Workforce Training and Education Coordinating Board. The board's membership reflects equal representation from business, government, and labor. The Washington State Labor Council is involved in planning the state's efforts and is pursuing a strategy to expand work-based learning opportunities for students. Under a proposed program jointly supported by U.S. West and the Communications Workers of America, incumbent workers who take leave for further training will be temporarily replaced by students. It is anticipated that this strategy will facilitate the expansion of work-based learning opportunities.

In Iowa organized labor administers a union-based School-to-Work Mentoring Project that promotes school-to-work efforts among union members and their employers. The project encourages the expansion of work-based learning opportunities, trains workplace mentors, and promotes the development of personal relationships with students.

Publicize the School-to-Work Concept

Before publicizing opportunities for employer participation in school-to-work programs, state officials should have a clear idea of what they are trying to promote. Communications should explain the school-to-work program, make a compelling case for why employers are needed, and indicate how participation can help serve business needs.

Using research information, the input of employers, and advice from individuals with marketing expertise, states can convey the essence of school-to-work programs and persuade employers to participate by developing key "messages." These messages should identify employers' needs and highlight how school-to-work involvement might help them address those needs.

Effective marketing materials communicate their message in very clear and simple terms, anticipate employer concerns, and use a bottom-line approach.

They should avoid using very abstract concepts and school-to-work jargon. The materials might include suggested "next steps" for employers.

States can provide general brochures to local partnerships that they can then use in their own recruitment efforts. These brochures might include space for the names and phone numbers of local program coordinators.

Another popular publicity strategy is hosting employer conferences. The purpose of these events is to bring employers together to inform them about school-to-work concepts, generate their interest, and hear their concerns. Governors often host these conferences to demonstrate their commitment to school to work.

Kentucky's school-to-work employers' conference was designed to appeal to employers. The agenda was developed by business representatives so that they could make the event useful for their peers, and it focused on the basics of participation. To ensure that the discussion was driven by employers, business representatives made many of the presentations. Conference planners also stipulated that each local area send three employers for every nonemployer it sent to attend the conference.

As part of Michigan's conference for all school-to-work stakeholders, state officials held a preconference event exclusively on employer involvement. The conference included sessions for employers that addressed ways they can recruit their peers.

An added benefit of holding conferences is that they can be used to obtain feedback on employer recruitment and outreach strategies. When Arkansas Governor Jim Guy Tucker hosted a business and industry summit, employers identified important barriers and noted that business recruitment would be best conducted by business peers on a regional basis. In Ohio the Governor's Human Resources Investment Council and the legislature held regional forums to solicit input from school-to-work stakeholders, including employers. The results of such conferences not only suggest a sense of what employers value, but also indicate how employers' concerns vary by region.

Provide How-to Information to Employers

Many employers do not understand how school-to-work programs are implemented and how students can be incorporated into the workplace. Providing supervision for young people and designing learning plans for students can pose new challenges to employers who ordinarily supervise and develop training programs for adults. To make it easier for employers to participate, school-to-work planners can develop "how-to" information to guide employers in establishing school-to-work activities.

Several states are developing manuals designed to provide step-by-step guidance to employers on designing student workplace experiences. These manuals may include descriptions of employer responsibilities, sample learning plans, and tips for working with young people. States also can provide employers with materials based on the employer perspective, such as those published by the National Alliance of Business.

Training for workplace mentors is another popular type of assistance that states are providing. State school-to-work planners develop training sessions for company employees who will supervise students in the workplace. These mentors are given information and guidance on how to design learning plans and how to deal with the unique challenges of working with young people.

Child labor laws and workplace safety are other important concerns. States can provide information on strategies for dealing with these responsibilities based on existing model programs.

Indiana will establish a School-to-Work Institute that will be a technical assistance center "without walls." The institute will have consultants and technical assistance providers who are ready to help employers and other stakeholders design and implement school-to-work activities.

The challenge in providing this "how-to" information on school-to-work programs is to create resources that are clear and helpful but not overly complex and prescriptive so that employers can develop their own approaches.

Oklahoma's Marketing and Communications Plan

Using focus groups and the findings of existing market research, planners in Oklahoma developed a marketing and communications plan for employer recruitment. They developed eleven potential messages that could be used in materials or activities, including the following.

"School to work will benefit you by providing more capable workers whose training you helped to design and implement. It gives you the opportunity to shape the kind of employees you need before you hire them, cutting down the need for expensive training on the job."

The plan also includes a list of suggested recruitment ideas that can be used by local partnerships. One recommendation is to "provide lots of public recognition and praise for individuals and businesses that become involved with school to work–newspaper articles and/or ads, plaques, or certificates."

Source: The School-to-Work Marketing Technical Committee, "The Career Connection: A Marketing and Communications Plan for the Successful Implementation of Oklahoma's School-to-Work System," Oklahoma City, Okla., 1995.

III. State Strategies To Reduce Barriers To Employer Participation

Notwithstanding the good intentions of employers, several barriers may impede their participation in school-to-work programs. Three of the barriers employers most frequently cite are:

- high costs,
- challenges in developing working relationships with schools, and
- child labor restrictions, liability concerns, and workers' compensation requirements.

Governors and program planners must be ready to address these barriers and develop ways to overcome them if school-to-work efforts are to become a way of doing business. Creative solutions are possible if educators and employers agree on the goals of school-to-work programs and work together.

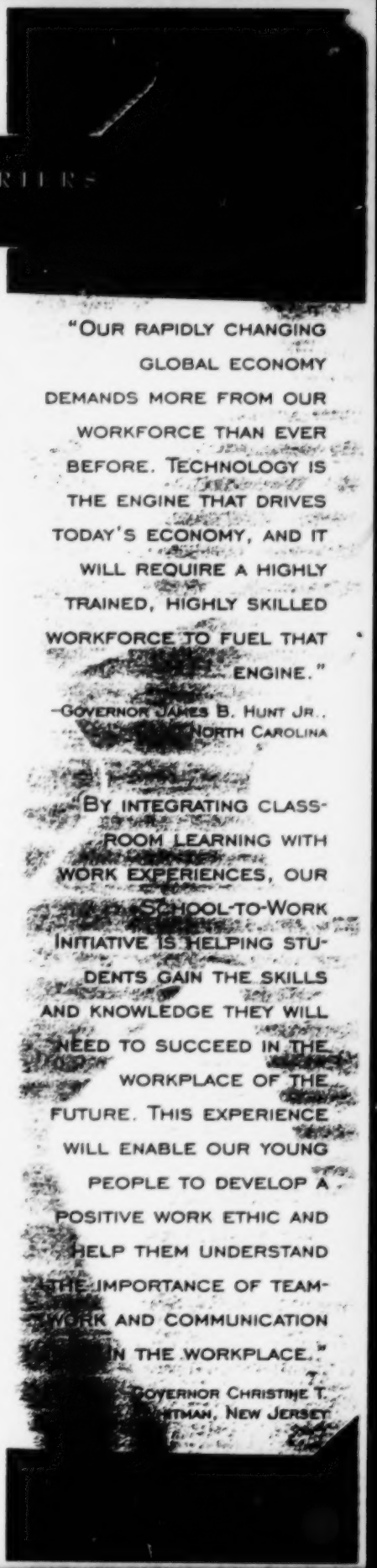
High Costs

Participating in school-to-work initiatives often is costly. The costs vary depending on the type of participation employers choose. If employers offer work experience to students, then their costs could include student wages, materials and equipment, and staff time to develop activities and supervise students. Firms often make these expenditures to train members of their existing workforce, but using company resources to train young school-to-work participants does not necessarily contribute to their bottom line.

Providing financial incentives such as tax credits and wage subsidies is one of the most frequently discussed strategies for addressing the barrier of high costs. However, the effect of these incentives on employer participation is unclear. Research on the use of financial incentives in traditional job training programs suggests that this strategy has not succeeded in inducing employers to hire certain individuals that they would not otherwise hire.[6] Yet there has been little evaluation of the effect of using these incentives in conjunction with the unique features of school-to-work programs. Employer surveys reveal that at least some employers believe that the incentives would encourage firms to participate that would not otherwise do so. Regardless, employers agree that financial incentives lose their effectiveness if obtaining such credits involves too much bureaucracy and paperwork.

A few states are experimenting with the use of financial incentives.

- Arkansas will provide income tax credits to employers who participate in its registered youth apprenticeship program. The credit is equal to $2,000 or 10 percent of the apprentice's wages.
- Illinois instituted an income tax credit equal to 20 percent of payroll expenditures for students enrolled in tech-prep programs, which combine secondary and postsecondary education to prepare students for technical careers.
- Oregon gives employers a 50 percent reimbursement for their expenses associated with offering students work-based learning experiences, up to a maximum of $2,500 per student. In lieu of the financial reimbursement, employers can opt to use the credit for incumbent worker training at the local



"Our rapidly changing global economy demands more from our workforce than ever before. Technology is the engine that drives today's economy, and it will require a highly trained, highly skilled workforce to fuel that [illegible] engine."

–Governor James B. Hunt Jr., North Carolina

"By integrating classroom learning with work experiences, our School-to-Work Initiative is helping students gain the skills and knowledge they will need to succeed in the workplace of the future. This experience will enable our young people to develop a positive work ethic and help them understand the importance of teamwork and communication in the workplace."

–Governor Christine T. [illegible]tman, New Jersey

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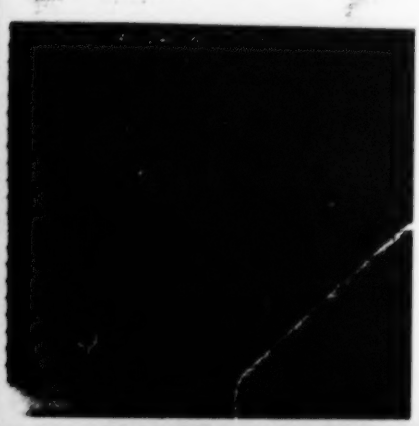
Developing the Employer-Educator Relationship

Planners at both the state and local levels should consider strategies that will foster good working relationships between employers and educators. Some leading school-to-work analysts recommend the following.

- Initially, seek the support of top-level executives.
- For detail-oriented planning, work with less-senior company staff.
- Ask employers to meet at times that are convenient to them.
- Keep the meeting short.
- Develop a simple agenda and stick to it during the meeting.
- Don't pretend to have all the solutions. Focus on the desired outcomes for students and let the partners help decide how to achieve those outcomes.
- Define goals for the partnership and measure progress along the way.



community colleges in order to link school-to-work initiatives and existing workforce training efforts

- Wisconsin reimburses employers for 50 percent of a youth apprentice's wages, up to a maximum of $1,000. Employers may keep the funds or donate them to their local partnerships for program administration.

Another strategy is to encourage employers to participate in ways that are less costly. Expecting a large number of employers to begin high-intensity, high-cost programs may be unrealistic.[7] School-to-work planners should encourage employers to participate in a variety of ways depending on the amount that employers are willing to pay to meet their particular business needs.

For example, employers could provide trial work experiences for limited periods or send employees to teach in the classroom. These limited, low-cost experiences can be combined with other school-to-work activities to provide a range of experiences for students. For example, West Virginia is facilitating inexpensive types of employer involvement that focus on career exploration activities. Encouraging both relatively high- and low-cost types of employer involvement can expand the number of employers who are willing to participate. It is also possible that once employers have good experiences with these low-cost programs, they might be willing to expand their participation and commit more resources.

Costs can also be reduced if employers join together to share responsibilities and expenses. Equipment and training materials can be shared either through informal consortia or business and trade associations. Other types of assistance provided to employers, such as state-sponsored training for workplace mentors, can help defray employer costs.

Employer costs for student wages can be reduced by obtaining subminimum wage certificates from the U.S. Department of Labor; these certificates allow employers to pay as little as 75 percent of the minimum wage to students who meet certain requirements and are working as part of a learning experience. However, few employers have taken advantage of this option because of problems in attracting students to subminimum wage jobs.

Challenges in Developing Working Relationships with Schools

Developing and operating school-to-work programs requires extensive collaboration between educators and employers. However, their working relationship often faces many challenges because these two groups have different missions, perspectives, and ways of doing business.

Business leaders often work in fast-paced environments where decisions must be made quickly. Employers often believe that educators and schools focus too much on process and not on results and that they are too slow in responding to requests. Business leaders also express concern that some educators and guidance counselors are not entirely committed to the goals of school-to-work programs.

To help deal with these challenges, school-to-work planners can streamline the employer participation process to make it easier for employers to get involved.

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Child Labor Restrictions, Liability Concerns, and Workers' Compensation Requirements

When employers invite students to learn at work sites, they assume significant responsibilities. Students are much less experienced and mature than adult workers and therefore require special attention.

First, employers must comply with federal and state child labor laws and regulations that detail the age, hour, and working environment requirements for minors. For example, minors are restricted from working in hazardous environments. In creating workplace learning experiences for students, many employers lack clear information on these laws and regulations. Several states are reviewing their laws and regulations to determine whether they are compatible with school-to-work programs and whether they should be clarified or modified to provide more flexibility.

In addition to these legal restrictions, employers often express concern over liability and workers' compensation issues. Because students are inexperienced, they may be more likely to be involved in workplace accidents in which they harm themselves, other workers, or the public. These accidents not only cause initial damage, but may also ultimately increase employers' insurance premiums. Moreover, some insurance vendors may be reluctant to write policies for minors or will do so only at high rates.

Some states are investigating the establishment of "shell corporations," or nonprofit organizations, to serve as the employer of record. For example, Maine established a Center for Youth Apprenticeship as a unit of the Maine Technical College System. Employers pay a fee to the center for each apprentice they hire, and the center then pays student wages and provides apprentices with workers' compensation coverage. The designation of the center as the employer of record protects the individual employers from liability. Other states are encouraging the creation of these entities at the local level.

Alternatively, if states determine that the liability concerns are too formidable, they can investigate purchasing a blanket insurance policy to cover school-to-work students who participate in work-site experiences. This barrier can also be mitigated by focusing on activities and industries in which safety is relatively less of a concern.

Other Barriers

Surveys of employers reveal that a number of other barriers make them hesitant to participate in school-to-work programs. The importance of each barrier varies among states, industries, and employers. Some of the other barriers cited are the following.

- **Students' lack of job readiness.** Employers contend that many students have inadequate job readiness skills. Students are uninformed about the importance of behaviors such as being on time, dressing presentably, and taking initiative. These problems may make employers reluctant to offer workplace experiences to teenaged students.

  To address this problem, students can be taught about the importance of these workplace skills through their work in the classroom. Some programs provide students training in resume preparation, interview skills, and communication in the workplace.

- **Difficulty in incorporating students into the workplace.** Some employers have problems finding ways for students to learn at their work sites. In certain fast-paced

- Make sure that employers have real "work" to do, so that they are not just bystanders at the meeting.
- Give employers credit and publicize their contributions.
- Encourage employers to first get involved in small ways before they make a big commitment.
- Assign a single individual to serve as the contact point for employers.
- Work through chambers of commerce, trade associations, and business groups to communicate with business leaders.

Sources: Susan Goldberger, Richard Kazis, and Mary Kathleen O'Flanagan, *Learning Through Work: Designing and Implementing Quality Worksite Learning for High School Students* (New York: Manpower Demonstration Research Corporation, 1994); School and Main, "All About Partnerships" (Boston, Mass.: School and Main, n.d.); and U.S. Department of Labor, *School-to-Work Connections: Formulas for Success*, Washington, D.C., 1992.

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environments, there is little time to supervise students and little productive work that students are qualified to perform. Employers may also have difficulty in developing training plans for students, a task that can be time-consuming.

With advice from educators, some states are preparing handbooks and other forms of guidance to help employers structure work experiences for students. Many states also are providing training for workplace supervisors to teach them ways to cope with the challenges of supervising young people.

- **Economic fluctuations.** Taking on new responsibilities to work with students is a large financial commitment, and employers are often reluctant to do so in times of economic uncertainty. If employers are exceedingly busy, then they have little time to train students. If business is slow and the firm is downsizing, employers may not want to bring in student workers while they are laying off incumbent workers.

This barrier can be addressed by planning recruitment efforts to coincide with employers' future workforce needs. Employers who anticipate growth in the future may be more likely to make investments in school-to-work programs today.

Although these barriers are problematic, many school-to-work programs—with commitments from both educators and employers—have developed ways of addressing them.

IV. What Governors Can Do

Gubernatorial leadership is critical in articulating a strong, positive vision of the pathway to economic viability. A key element is preparing the future workforce for the challenges that lie ahead through school-to-work initiatives.

To foster the necessary collaboration between the public and private sectors, Governors can use their influence and leadership to bring the relevant groups together. Governors can get the attention of the public and key business leaders in a way that no other state officials can. They can create opportunities to promote and publicize school-to-work initiatives, emphasizing that they are a means to improve education for young people and to meet the workforce needs of business. Governors can emphasize the importance of school-to-work initiatives and can make personal appeals to their contacts in the business community.

Gubernatorial leadership is also critical in fostering the collaboration among state agencies needed to make the school-to-work system responsive to employer needs. To ensure solid linkages between the classroom and the workplace, state officials in education, economic development, workforce development, and other arenas must work together. Governors can foster this collaboration by making the building of the school-to-work system an imperative and by providing state agencies with recognition for their efforts.

Governors can do the following.

- Stress the importance of the linkages among education, students' future career successes, firms' competitiveness, and the state's economic strength.
- Target key industries that are likely to employ tomorrow's workforce and suggest school-to-work transition as a strategy.
- Set school-to-work initiatives as a high priority for the state's economic development system and elementary, secondary, and postsecondary education systems.
- Meet with and recruit the state's top business leaders.
- Speak to members of statewide business groups and encourage them to play a role.
- Appoint influential business leaders as key school-to-work spokespeople.
- Publicize the school-to-work efforts of leading employers and recognize and thank them for their participation.
- Initiate a review of state laws, regulations, and practices that pose barriers to employer participation.

Governors are in a unique position to convince the public, employers, and other education stakeholders that school-to-work efforts create opportunities for students, hold benefits for employers, and pave the way for addressing future economic challenges. They can communicate the need for employers and other partners to share the responsibility for ensuring that the education system prepares students for the changing workplace requirements and the demands of a global economy.

"Working closely with business is just good common sense. At some point, our graduates will go to work, and our education system must be sure our students have skills that are in demand in today's workplace. We count on business to identify those skills.

If we're going to compete in the global economy, we need to create a school system that consistently meets world-class standards in reasoning and problem solving.

ENDNOTES

[1] "GM Drives Home the Need for Auto Service Apprentices," in *Educating for Employment*, vol. 1, no. 7 (September 1995), LRP Publications, Horsham, Pa., 6.

[2] National Alliance of Business, *How School-to-Work Works for Business: A Report on Business Involvement in School-to-Work* (Washington, D.C.: National Alliance of Business, 1994), 12.

[3] U.S. Congress, Office of Technology Assessment, *Learning to Work: Making the Transition from School to Work*, OTA-HER-637 (Washington, D.C.: U.S. Government Printing Office, September 1995), 83-85.

[4] Basil J. Whiting and Wade Sayer, *School-to-Work or School-to-What?: Exploring Prospects for Building Employer Capacity in School-to-Work Programming*, Interim Report Prepared for The Pew Charitable Trusts (Philadelphia, Pa.: Public/Private Ventures, October 1995).

[5] Whiting and Sayer, 13.

[6] Research summarized by the Office of Technology Assessment, U.S. Congress.

[7] Alan M. Hershey and Marsha K. Silverberg, "Employer Involvement in School-to-Work Transition Programs: What Can We Really Expect?" (paper presented by Mathematica Policy Research, Inc., at a conference of the Association for Public Policy Analysis and Management, Chicago, Ill., October 29, 1994), 12.

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